

# The Soul Not Found

Article Suggested by Father Sherman's Foolish  
Twaddle---Refused to Answer the Questions.

(By Wm. H. Cox.)

The Catholics are the last ones to ring down the curtain on the religious mania, in our old and peaceful city for the year of 1908.

All the churches, both great and small, have held their usual revivals, as of old, and can now sleep dormant until their spirits awaken them from for the year of 1909.

As this thing is spasmodic we know it will appear again. We only hope that when it makes its usual appearance it will be a better and saner, and a safer religion than we have had in the past.

The different religious sects have at last quit murdering each other and persecuting all others who do not accept their creed and dogma. I take this for a sign of the times---that it is dying a slow and peaceful death. The narcotic which she has received at the hands of the "Free Thought Press" is putting her peacefully and finally on the shelf of oblivion where she should have rested by rights long ago. In a few more generations she will not be able to muster enough of the faithful to comfortably fill the mourner's bench.

The last one to appear on the religious horizon here has been the distinguished catholic priest "Rev. Father Sherman." He has been here and held the boards at the Auditorium for a week in the interests of Romanism and the catholic church. Our city papers in speaking of this distinguished guest have lauded him high, as a speaker and thinker. Being a priest taken from a protestant family he has been somewhat a drawing card and has met fairly good sized mixed audiences that assembled to hear him propound the Roman Catholic doctrine. He advertised in the papers that he would answer questions that were put into the question box, that they had arranged at the door, leading into the main auditorium and being a "Good Christian" myself and having a few nuts to crack in the way of some Biblical questions I wanted him to explain, I went down loaded for the occasion and put them in his holy box. But lo, and behold, he ignored every one of them although they were taken from this "Holy Book" they all love so dearly, and of course I was somewhat disappointed in this strange turn of affairs as I expected him to make some effort to explain them at least. But then the road of the transgressor is hard and the safest way for him to do was to keep his mouth shut. And this is exactly what he did do in this question matter.

The main subject of this learned prelate was the Soul. After hearing him define what the soul is I was not surprised at him keeping perfectly still on the Bible questions. This is how this distinguished priest defines the soul of man. He says, "This great and grand power of the human brain to born a thought, to articulate and express the thought in words. This magnetic brain current is the soul, and is capable of and does live after the death of the body."

To my mind this definition is not a good one. But he does not prove this is a spiritual thing that can or does survive the death of the body. To illustrate what he believes to be a fact, he says he heard of a man who met with an acci-

dent by having a crow-bar run through his head. And it was tightly embodied there; they cut the bar off close to his head and the man lived for years afterwards with this iron in his head. And now behold the grand-stand play he makes when he says to his audience, "Does this man think with a crow-bar or a brain."

To all such argument as this I would say, that all priests from Constantine's time to the present have been thinking with a crow-bar in stead of a good healthy brain. We all know there is a portion of the brain that can be removed and the person live and still have their faculties, and there is another portion that cannot be removed unless instant death ensues. So it is easy to see the point he was trying to make with his rusty crow-bar reference. His whole argument on this subject was more like that of a hottenot than that of a philosopher.

This distinguished priest answered three questions that someone unknown to me had put into his "hot-box." Two of them I shall give. The third one I have forgotten. The first one was, "Why do priests pray in latin." His answer was, "Because all modern languages are changeable." Certain words in one generation may mean the reverse in the next. The second one was "What is Purgatory." His answer, "An intermediate place between heaven and earth where the soul goes until prayed for."

Does this holy father want us to infer that God cannot keep up with the languages as they change, or the usage of words, or that he does not understand any other language than latin. Or is not purgatory the greatest place the priest has got to extort money from their people for saying mass for the repose of the soul in purgatory. Is it not a fact the more ignorant they can keep their people the easier it is for them to work off their "Holy Twaddle." Work their charm and take their money. O, consistency, thou art a jewel.

In the science of mathematics they prove all mathematical problems beyond a shadow of a doubt. In the science of chemistry they dissolve the material body and the different parts that compose the whole structure are here found and made known. The human body has thus been dissolved by chemists, but this supposed soul has never yet been found. It is only a delusion the same as "Santa Claus" or God, and it never did inhabit the material body. It is an unknown quantity and absolutely beyond the power of any man to make it clear that it is a spiritual thing and leaves the body at death. I have been on this planet for fifty years and have always treated this material body to the best that was in my means and power. I have never done anything contrary to my nature, and if there was any such thing as a spirit dwelling within me I am the party that is the most capable of its discovery. This I say is possible for me while I am in my full mental and physical strength. If it was a reality I am sure I should have made its acquaintance before this, but I deny the whole spiritual theory with one stroke of my pen, and to those who affirm let them prove it, and settle the argument, forever and forever.

Do you not think the soul would make itself manifest to me while I am still in this life and capable of understanding what life liberty and happiness is if it depended on the

actions and deeds committed in this material body while in life for its salvation for a future life after the death of the body. I think so, my friends. If it was a reality it would do so. There would be no such a thing as a lost soul, to be burned and tormented in a lake of hell-fire for ever and for ever. If it were only true it is high time come one was making the discovery and bring it forward from its dark and mouldy resting place ever since the beginning of man on the face of the earth.

Let every man and woman look squarely on this subject as they would on any other proposition. Let them weigh every bit of evidence on the subject and then draw their own conclusions. I do not wish to take one consoling thought from any one so long as that thought is not detrimental to the human family. And to those who can find a consoling thought in a spiritual life after death while debauching this material body in life, they are perfectly welcome to it. Such a thought does not harmonize with my material nature, neither do I believe it. I sympathize most deeply with the person who cannot see the beautiful side of a material life. It is the present, the now, that we should cultivate. Make this a real heaven instead of what it is. If the whole human family were educated enough to live in a congenial fraternity of love, what a happy and grand world this would be.

The reason a materialist is an honest and moral person, is because he knows it is the only real way for him to live and get the best out of this life there is in it. Do right from the principle that it is exactly right to do right. When this is done you can always drink the nectar that flows from the fountain of nature which is always cool, healthy and invigorating.

## ESSAY ON MAN

(By M. Grier Kidder.)

"What is man! an insignificant nothing, masquerading as something. Bouyed up with vanity, puffed into a caricature of wisdom, born of insolence, born of ignorance, he struts about his speck of dust, knowing not at what instant disease or violence will perform a miracle by making nothing less. The dupe of fancy, the prey of envy the sport of fate, helpless in infancy, a fool at maturity, a dotard in age. Too arrogant to know he knows nothing. Too forgetful to remember that he will be forgotten.

On he goes, playing his poor part, till death closes his eyes in "dreamless sleep" and he sinks into that shoreless ocean, oblivion."

## RELIGIOUS REFLECTIONS.

To Mrs. Josephine K. Henry.

The Cosmic Potter while at work one day,  
Saw, close beside him, a small piece of clay,  
Of finer substance than he'd worked before,  
In all erecting from the Cosmic store.

With this finer clay he evolved the plan  
Of something better than creating man,  
And, lo! a woman of superior mind,  
With love of justice for all mankind.

And love of freedom in the world of thot,  
An honest woman not sold nor bought.  
Slowly he worked midst the cosmic scene,  
And immortal genius came to Josephine.

—The Chaplain.

San Francisco, California.